

Message Text

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R 051556Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8322

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 3919

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT SF

SUBJ: PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE: CONVERSATION WITH F.W. DE KLERK

1. SUMMARY: IN A LONG DISCUSSION OF THE FORTHCOMING PROPOSALS FOR RESTRUCTURING THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM, THE N.P. INFO CHIEF FOR THE TRANSVAAL, F.W. DE KLERK INDICATED THAT THE NEW GOVT STRUCTURE WOULD POSSIBLY INCLUDE: 1) A PARLIAMENT AND PRIME MINISTER FOR EACH OF THE THREE POPULATION GROUPS (WHITE, INDIAN AND COLORED); 2) AUTHORITY VESTED IN EACH PARLIAMENT TO AMEND AS IT WISHED SUCH MATTERS AS THE IMMORALITY ACT AS APPLIED TO ITS OWN PEOPLE; 3) A JOINT DECISION-MAKING BODY WITH PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION BY POPULATION THUS GIVING THE WHITES A MAJORITY; 4) A DELINEATION OF MUTUAL MATTERS OF CONCERN THAT REQUIRED A CONSENSUS, AND 5) AN AGREEMENT ON WHICH RACIAL GROUP WOULD HOLD WHICH NATIONAL PORTFOLIO. DE KLERK FORESAW ELECTION TO THE NEW INDIAN AND COLORED PARLIAMENTS DURING THE SECOND HALF OF 1978. END SUMMARY.

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2. IN A CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY POLCON ON AUG 4, F.W. DE KLERK, M.P. AND NATIONAL PARTY INFORMATION CHIEF FOR THE TRANSVALL, DISCUSSED THE FORTHCOMING PROPOSALS ON RESTRUCTURING THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM TO ACCOMMODATE COLORED AND INDIAN POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS. DE KLERK IS A LEADING VERLIGTE (LIBERAL) AND THE BROTHER OF WILLEM DE KLERK, THE INFLUENTIAL EDITOR

OF THE NATIONAL PARTY ORGAN, DIE TRANSVALER.

3. DE KLERK SAID THAT THE PARTY WAS REORGANIZING ITS INFORMATION DEPT IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN GRASS-ROOTS COMMUNICATIONS. HE SAID THERE WOULD BE MORE EMPHASIS ON DISCUSSIONS WITH SMALL GROUPS OF PARTY MEMBERS ON IMPORTANT POLICY ISSUES. THIS NEW EFFORT, HE SAID, WAS STIMULATED BY THE NEED TO PREPARE THE PEOPLE FOR "BIG CHANGES" WHICH ARE IN STORE.

4. HE INDICATED THAT THE "BIG CHANGES" DEALT ONLY WITH THE POLITICAL DISPENSATION REGARDING INDIANS AND COLOREDS. HE FORESAW NO IMPORTANT CHANGE IN NATIONAL PARTY POLICIES REGARDING HOMELANDS OR URBAN BLACKS. THERE WOULD BE ADJUSTMENTS AND REFORMS IN THE LATTER TWO AREAS, HE INDICATED, BUT NO PROFOUND STRUCTURAL CHANGE AS CONTEMPLATED FOR INDIANS AND COLOREDS.

5. AS HAVE OTHER NP LEADERS, DE KLERK SAID THAT THE IDEA OF SEPARATE PARLIAMENTS FOR THE WHITE, INDIAN AND COLORED POPULATIONS WAS LIKELY TO BE THE CORE OF THE NEW SYSTEM. EACH PARLIAMENT WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AFFAIRS IN ITS OWN AREA. DE KLERK REFERRED TWICE TO "THE PRIME MINISTERS," AND WHEN ASKED, SAID THAT HE EXPECTED THAT THERE WOULD IN

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FACT BE THREE PRIME MINISTERS EQUAL IN STATUS SO FAR AS PROTOCOL WAS CONCERNED. BUT, HE ADDED, THERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCE IN THE POWER THAT THEY WIELDED IN TERMS OF THE ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS. HE DREW THE COMPARISON BETWEEN KAUNDA AND BANDA: "THEY ARE OFFICIALLY EQUAL AS HEADS OF STATE BUT ONE IS OBVIOUSLY MORE IMPORTANT."

6. ASKED ABOUT HOW THE SYSTEM WOULD DEAL WITH THE MANY ISSUES WHICH CONCERNED LOCAL COMMUNITIES DIRECTLY, BUT ALSO HAD IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRENT NATIONAL POLICY, SUCH AS THE IMMORALITY AND MARRIAGE ACTS AND THE IMMIGRATION OF INDIAN BRIDES, DE KLERK HAD A READY ANSWER. HE SAID "ONE IDEA" WAS THAT THE COLORED PARLIAMENT, IF IT WISHED, COULD ANNUL THE IMMORALITY ACT INsofar AS IT APPLIED TO COLOREDS; THUS IF A COLORED MAN SLEPT WITH A WHITE WOMAN, THE LATTER COULD BE ARRESTED BY THE WHITE AUTHORITIES, BUT THE COLORED INVOLVED WOULD HAVE BROKEN NO LAW. IN THE SAME WAY, MIXED MARRIAGES MIGHT BE ALLOWED IN THE COLORED AND INDIAN AREAS BUT NOT THE WHITE. (HE DID

NOT EXPLAIN WHETHER THE WHITE PARTNER OF A MIXED MARRIAGE WOULD BE SUBJECT TO ARREST SHOULD HE/SHE WANDER INTO THE WHITE AREA.) ON IMMIGRATION, HE SAID THAT THIS PROBLEM COULD BE SOLVED BY PROVIDING A CERTAIN QUOTA OF IMMIGRANTS, WHICH EACH COMMUNITY COULD ALLOT AS IT SAW FIT.

7. DE KLERK SAID THE EXACT STRUCTURE OF THE PROPOSED JOINT DECISION-MAKING BODY HAD NOT YET BEEN DETERMINED, BUT IT WOULD, HE THOUGHT, BE A FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT INTER-CABINET COUNCIL. THE ICC, HE SAID, WAS "AN EMBRYO" POLITICAL ORGANIZATION WHERE VIEWS WERE SIMPLY AIRED AMONG THE THREE GROUPS. THE NEW BODY, HE THOUGHT, WOULD HAVE GENUINE JOINT DECISION-CONFIDENTIAL

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MAKING AUTHORITY, AS DISTINCT FROM POWER-SHARING AUTHORITY. HE SAID THERE WERE VARIOUS IDEAS ON HOW IT WOULD BE STRUCTURED AND HOW ITS MEMBERS WOULD BE ELECTED. IT WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, BE A JOINT PARLIAMENT AS SUCH. APPARENTLY, HOWEVER, THERE WOULD BE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN THE JOINT BODY BASED ON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PRETORIA 3919

THE POPULATION OF EACH OF THE THREE GROUPS. HE SAID THE WHITES COULD OUT VOTE THE INDIANS AND COLOREDS COMBINED IN THE JOINT COUNCIL FOR SOME TIME TO COME. WHEN ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THERE WERE A SPLIT AMONG THE WHITE REPS, HE REPLIED THAT SOME PROVISION WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE TO PREVENT A "MINORITY GROUP" WITHIN ONE PARLIAMENT JOINING FORCES WITH REPS OF ONE OR BOTH OF THE OTHER TWO ETHNIC BODIES. (THIS COMMENT SUGGESTS THAT THE MAJORITY PARTY IN EACH PARLIAMENTS MIGHT NOMINATE ALL OF ITS RACIALS GROUP'S MEMBERS TO THE JOINT DECISION-MAKING BODY.)

8. HE THOUGH THAT MOST OF THE DECISIONS IN THE JOINT BODY WOULD BE BY CONSENSUS BUT NOT NECESSARILY ALL. THE ISSUES THAT REQUIRED A CONSENSUS FOR APPROVAL WOULD HAVE TO BE SPELLED OUT. ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF ON A "CONSENSUS ISSUE" NO CONSENSUS WAS REACHED, HE SPECULATED THAT IN SOME CASES THIS WOULD MEAN NO ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN. IN OTHER CASES, A WAY WOULD HAVE TO BE FOUND TO RESOLVE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ISSUE. IF IT WERE A QUESTION OF DECLARING WAR, FOR EXAMPLE, THE ISSUE COULD NOT SIMPLY BE LEFT UNRESOLVED.

9. HE AGREED WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT POSSIBLY THE STATE PRES WOULD SERVE AS FINAL ARBITER ON IMPORTANT STALEMATED ISSUES. HE SPECULATED THAT THE STATE PRES WOULD BE SELECTED BY A VOTE OF THE JOINT BODY. HE CONCURRED THAT IT WAS CONCEIVABLE THAT UNDER SUCH A SYSTEM THERE COULD BE A COLORED PRES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. BUT IN REALITY, HE BELIEVED, THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE BECAUSE THE WHITES WOULD OUT VOTE THE OTHER TWO RACES. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE STATE PRES WOULD BE GIVEN ANY OTHER ADDITIONAL POWERS. HE BELIEVED IT WAS THE GENERAL VIEW THAT THIS POSITION SHOULD REMAIN ABOVE POLITICS. UNDER THE NEW SYSTEM, THE BUREAUCRACY, HE THOUGHT, WOULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE TO ANY OF THE THREE PARLIAMENTS BUT WOULD BE "SEPARATE". WHEN ASKED HOW THEY WOULD CHOOSE THEMINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE, WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN TO ALL RACES, HE SUGGESTED THAT THERE COULD BE AN AGREEMENT ON WHICH RACIAL GROUP WAS TO HOLD WHICH PORTFOLIO.

10. DE KLERK SAID THERE WOULD BE A MEETING OF THE NP PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS SOON TO REVIEW THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE. (THE PRESS ON AUG 5 REPORTED

THE CAUCUS WOULD BE ON AUG 20 IN CCAPE TOWN.) THE
PROVINCIAL CONGRESSES WOULD THEN CONSIDER THE
PROPOSALS. HE DID NOT BELIEVE A NATIONAL CONGRESS
OF THE PARTY WOULD BE CONVOKED BUT THAT THE NP FEDERAL
COUNCIL WOULD REVIEW THE PROVINCIAL SOUNDINGS AND
THE RESULTS OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THE INDIAN AND
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COLORED COMMUNITIES. DE KLERK SAID THAT ONLY A
GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF
THE REFORMS WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE PROVINCIAL
CONGRESSES. THE FINAL REFORM PROPOSAL WOULD BE
SUBMITTED TO PARLIAMENT NEXT YEAR. EVEN AT THAT
STAGE, HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE PROPOSALS WOULD SPELL
OUT THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW INSTITUTIONS.
THE JOINT DECISION-MAKING BODY, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD
BE ESTABLISHED CONSTITUTIONALLY BUT PERHAPS THE FULL
RANGE OF ITS AUTHORITY AND STRUCTURE WOULD NOT BE
INCORPORATED IN THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE.
IF EVERYTHING GOES WELL, DE KLERK THOUGHT,
ELECTIONS TO THE INDIAN AND COLORED PARLIAMENTS
COULD TAKE PLACE DURING THE SECOND HALF OF 1978.
THE WHITE PARLIAMENT, HE SAID, WOULD NOT NECESSARILY
HAVE TO HOLD SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS.

11. COMMENT: DE KLERK SAID THAT HE WAS ONLY GIVING
HIS PERSONAL VIEWS AND SPECULATIONS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE
PARAMETERS OF THE FORTHCOMING CABINET COMMITTEE
PROPOSALS. BUT HE APPEARED WELL INFORMED ON THE
SUBJECT. AS THE OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR PROPAGATING
THE PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE NATIONAL PARTY CONSTITUENCY
IN THE TRANSVAAL, AND AS AN OTHERWISE WELL-CONNECTED
PARTY FIGURE, DE KLERK VERY LIKELY HAS MORE THAN AN
INKLING OF THE GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE SCHEME. HE
CLEARLY HAD THOUGHT THROUGH MANY OF THE PROBLEMS
INVOLVED IN WHAT SHOULD PROVE TO BE ONE OF THE MOST
CONVOLUTED GOVERNING MACHINES DEvised BY MAN. END
COMMENT.
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